

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6-12, 15 and 16 are pending in the present application. Claims 13 and 17-19 have been canceled and claims 1 and 16 have been amended by the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, claims 1 and 3-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Applicants admitted prior art (AAPA) in view of Darden and Lange.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for discussing this application with Applicant's representative on August 1, 2007. During the interview, the differences between the present invention and the applied art were discussed. No agreement was reached pending the Examiner's further review when a response is filed. Comments presented during the interview are reiterated below.

Claims 1 and 3-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over AAPA in view and Darden and Lange. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended independent claim 1 includes a combination of elements and is directed to a refrigerator door assembly including a sliding door configured to be slid open and closed, a handle provided on a top edge surface of the door, and a plurality of handle holders each having an end fixed to the door and another end attached to the handle. Further, the end fixed to the door includes a handle holder member extended to the handle, and a supporting member protruded in a first direction on a lower surface of the handle holder member and receivable within a groove provided in the door, for preventing damage from occurring on the handle holder. In addition, the supporting member is disposed between the handle and a securing

mechanism configured to secure a corresponding handle holder to the side of the door so as to absorb a force applied to the handle in a second direction opposite to the first direction and reinforce a strength of the handle holder when the sliding door is slid open and closed, and the supporting member is integrally formed with the handle holder such that the supporting member and the handle holder are a single unitary piece. Independent claim 16 includes similar features in a varying scope.

These features are supported at least by Figures 4 and 5 and the corresponding description in the specification. For example, Figure 4 illustrates the handle provided on the top edge surface of the door 20, a supporting member 40 protruding in a first direction on a lower surface of the handle holder member and receivable within a groove 21 provided in the door 20, for preventing damage from occurring on the handle holder 10. Figure 4 also illustrates the supporting member 40 being disposed between the handle 30 and a securing mechanism 17 to absorb a force applied to the handle 30 in a second direction opposite to the first direction and reinforce a strength of the handle holder 10 when the sliding door is slid open and closed. Figure 5 illustrates the supporting member 40 being integrally formed with the handle holder 10 such that the supporting member 40 and the handle holder 10 are a single unitary piece.

Regarding the subject matter recited in dependent claim 5, which recited that the supporting member and the handle holder are a single piece, the Office Action indicates the combination of teachings of Lange and Darden with those of AAPA would obviously produce a structure wherein the supporting member and the handle holder are a single piece. However, it is respectfully noted that the bit 90 in Darden is specifically disclosed as being a replaceable cutting tool or bit (see column 4, lines 1-12, for example). This teaches away from using the bit

90 of Darden as a single unitary piece with any other structure. That is, the structure in Darden is related to a replaceable bit 90, and thus would not be combined with any other structure to result in single unitary piece as in the present invention. Further, Darden is related to a log cutting tool, and thus one motivated in the art would not refer to the cutting tool in Darden as a feature related to a refrigerator door. In addition, Lange also specifically describes using a independent supporting piece.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted independent claims 1 and 16 and each of the claims depending therefrom are allowable.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

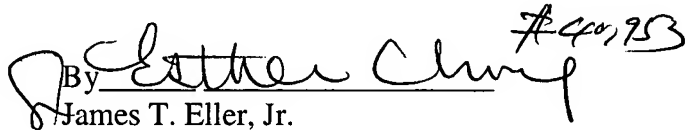
If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone David A. Bilodeau, Registration No. 42,235, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: August 31, 2007

Respectfully submitted,

By  #40,953

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